From: HJR153
Sent: Monday, August 23, 2004 4:44 PM
To: HJR153
Subject: HJR153 - Richard Dunn

Name: Richard Dunn
Street: 100 Oxford Circle
City, State, Zip: Williamsburg, VA 23185
Phone Number: 757 253-7801
Email: rdeditions@widomaker.com
Utility Type: electric
Company Name: hgr153c
Comments: To State Corp. Comm.
RE: Underground power lines. Public input.

· Putting power lines underground protects electricity, phones and TV from violent ice or wind storms, and thus saves the consumer very large expenditures of 1) traveling the family to safer havens (hotels, meals, gas, etc.), 2) purchase of generators (to supply the electricity the power companies are supposed to provide) to allow for essential heating or cooling, boiling unsafe water, protecting food from spoiling, and cooking, 3) medical bills resulting from traffic accidents (where there are no signals in operation) or illness due to the absence of heating/cooling, 4) increased insurance premiums for losses directly due to power loss, 5) increased cost of goods and services due to the increased cost of insurance to businesses, and the replacement or repair of electronic equipment damaged by current fluctuations. The unsightly overhead lines may also cause a reduction in the value of real estate in affected areas. With overhead lines, it is highly inconvenient, thoug
h these items are difficult to price, to be without the use of the phone, computers, stereo or TV for a week or two, and to have schools close and the school calendar changed thereby. Underground lines would sharply reduce the cost of buying, installing and maintaining poles and other overhead equipment, and would benefit the environment both through the reduction of forest destruction and the predictable propagation of trees in local landscapes.

· COSTS: In congested areas, water, sewer, and gas lines may cross intended underground power lines and these may require some ditching by hand—unless some of those utilities could be incorporated or a different placement planned. There will presumably also be the cost of suitable conduit or insulation to protect the circuit from damage by water or other seepage. Telephone lines and perhaps those of other utilities can share the trench—and also some of the costs. Presumably there will be the cost of periodic exit towers for the testing of circuits and for housing transformers. Costs will also be reduced by the cost of maintenance of affected overhead lines, and the reduction of total wage expenditures and health insurance costs for linemen.

· ELIGIBLE AREAS: In descending order of importance would be 1) hotels and residential areas of relatively high congestion (i.e. the population density per area or the number of service connections), 2) business areas of relatively high congestion (these lacking the possibility of significant human suffering), 3) relatively uncongested areas, 4) wide open spaces and rural areas.

· FUNDING OPTIONS: If the conversion is gradual, say 10-15% per year for eligible areas, the increase of cost would be small. Eligible areas would be some portion of the total service area, perhaps 50% of the mileage of lines. The conversion would presumably reduce the power company's costs in future time. As a result of these factors, the conversion would ultimately benefit ALL consumers by tending to reduce future monthly bills, and an increase of costs could therefore be added to all bills. It should be noted further, that a] the amount of increase is inversely proportional to the number of bills and b] that any special assessment would undoubtedly cause some serious, unfortunate burdens in the population.

· LAW: State law should apply because adjacent jurisdictions could vary, and that would make the implementation of the policy more difficult.